1:Redfield E-5 (1926-1927) 1930
NU37 Tepoztlan NU37
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daily tasks, whether on their own *milpas*[1] on the margins of the town or in *haciendas*, mills, or mines still farther away, tne male inhabitants scatter outside the village, returning at the end of the day, the week, or the season. But while the villagers live by agriculture, the village lives by trade. It is essentially a market, and the central *plaza*, where occur the periodic markets attended by people from other villages and where are situated all the public buildings and the private dwellings of size and importance, dominates and affords a focus for the town. The village, like Mexico itself, has a center and a periphery.

The state of Morelos lies upon the southern escarpment. It is the only state which lies entirely upon the slope; it forms one steep stairway up to the tableland. It is a small state, about the size of Delaware, but in its brief extent there is a descent of eight thousand feet. Its northern margin, the Sierra of Ajusco, which forms the southern rim of the great central basin, is a region of pine forests, chill winds, and charcoal-burners, while in the southern part of the state are tropical lowlands which produce coconuts and malaria.

Although only a small part of the state contains arable land,[2] nevertheless among the steep confusion of the mountains there are many sloping valleys which contain good soil and either receive sufficient rain or are watered by streams which arise in higher and wetter regions.

[1] Small agricultural tracts cultivated by individuals for their own benefit.

[2] About 10 per cent, according to Francisco Bulnes, *The Whole Truth about Mexico*, p. 88.

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NU37 Tepoztlan NU37

Sugar made Morelos a 175
contributor to the wealth of Mexico, but it reduced 249
the population to landless peonage. The revolution 423
which began in 1910, especially in Morelos, may be 669
regarded as the conflict between two social-economic systems: the one an ancient Indian tradition of self-sufficient and independent villages enjoying corporate land tenure, and the other a new capitalistic system of large-scale production of a money crop contributory to a world-economy. The agrarian reforms following the revolution broke up some of these estates. Others were kept together and operated by the state in an attempt to preserve the sugar plantations; but many lands where sugar was once grown have reverted to maize.

The northern border of Morelos lies along a part of 133
the rampart which hems in the valley of Mexico. Going south from Mexico City, one climbs this valley wall, the Sierra of Ajusco, at an elevation of nine thousand feet above the sea. Standing upon the southern edge of the escarpment one stands also on the threshold of Morelos. There the rampart drops suddenly away into warm green valleys that go on and down one beyond the other in a maze of slighter mountains that from this eminence are no more than hills.

In each shelf or pocket of the mountains lies a vil- 131
lage, or a cluster of villages. Close underneath the 133
row of peaks[1] which forms the last bulwark of the 361
escarpment is situated Tepoztlán. This village is the

[1] This *sierra*, the southwestern margin of the *cordillera* of Ajusco, extends southeastward to the *pueblo* of Tlayacapan, Morelos. It is composed of basaltic tufa and fine volcanic ash. [135]

1:Redfield E-5 (1926-1927)1930
NU37 Tepoztlan NU37

center of a cluster of villages which is not four miles in radius but which includes a descent of about twenty-five hundred feet, from San Juanico at an altitude of seven thousand feet to Santiago at about forty-five hundred.[1] These villages rest upon the topmost steps of the stairway, and these steps are the steepest.

Tepoztlán lies at the focus of a parabola of mountains the northern arm of which is the last escarpment wall. The southern arm is a range of somewhat lower mountains. The parabola opens southeastward; from Tepoztlán at its head the land slopes swiftly down to the valley of Yautepec. Thus Tepoztlán is not visible from the escarpment edge, but is hidden behind this screen of mountains, although from certain points almost half the extent of the state can be seen.

Whether the village is approached from above or from below it remains hidden in large part until it is actually entered. A density of trees, most of which bear either edible fruits or showy flowers, conceals the houses, which are all flat roofed and one story in height. Only the churches are taller; here and there they pierce the foliage. The great central church (*templo mayor*) on the *plaza* is by far the largest building in Tepoztlán; its great walls, crenelated to serve as battlements, and its two tall bell-towers dominate a village that, in the rainy season, escapes into and is lost in foliage.

[1] The *plaza* at Tepoztlán is at an altitude of about 1,700 meters (5,500 ft.) above sea-level.

1:Redfield E-5 (1926-1927) 1930
NU37 Tepoztlan NU37

these sources. Ixcatepec and Santiago are situated farther down the valley, outside the protecting walls, along the San Jerónimo, a tiny stream which arises in Tepoztlán and flows into the Rio Yautepec. The other five hamlets are almost or quite without immediate water; indeed, at Santa Catarina all water is carried to the town from a distance of about half a mile.

The small villages are naturally tributary to Tepoztlán because Tepoztlán is the large village to which they are nearest, but more particularly because most of them lie along the principal roads leading out of Tepoztlán. At the upper end of the valley, where the mountain wall is low, two roads go out: one north to Mexico City, the other southwest to Cuernavaca. San Juanico is situated on the former road; just off the latter road lies San Andres, and directly on it, Santa Catarina. The third road runs southeast down the widening valley to Yautepec. On this are situated Ixcatepec and Santiago. Santo Domingo and Amatlán lie on no main artery of travel, and for this reason they are much less definitely a part of the constellation of communities than are the other five. Much less often do the inhabitants of these two hamlets contribute to the market at Tepoztlán, or attend the *fiestas* there.

There is a great deal of travel among the villages of Morelos, and nearly all of it is travel on foot. A man or a woman of Tepoztlán will not infrequently make weekly trips, on foot, to Yautepec or to Cuernavaca, and will make the thirty-five or forty miles there and back in one day, often bearing a heavy load both

2:Lewis E-5 (1943-1948)1951 NU37 Tepoztlan NU37

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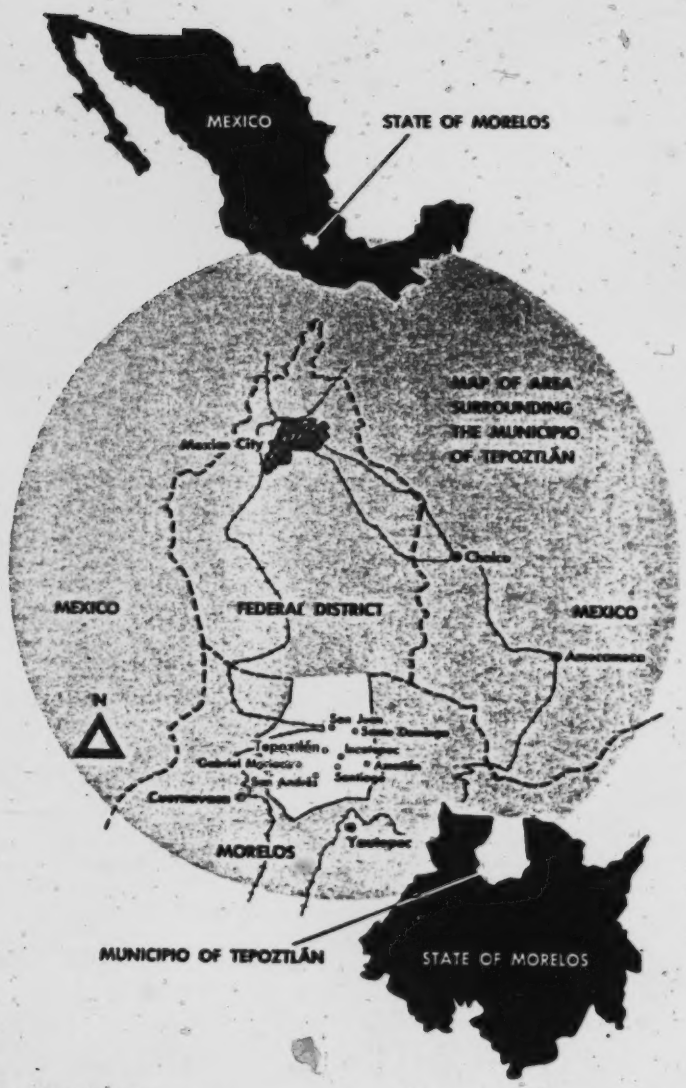

Fig. 1. Map of Mexico.

2:Lewis E-5 (1943-1948)1951 NU37 Tepoztlan NU37

171 of widespread contacts of the Indian peoples among themselves before the Spanish Conquest, and the common influence of Spanish colonial institutions since the Conquest.

Tepoztlán parallels, to a remarkable degree, many of the characteristics of Mexico as a whole. Within the relatively limited area of the municipio of Tepoztlán [24] we find practically the entire range of climatic zones of Mexico, from the *tierra fría* to *tierra caliente*, with their accompanying variety of natural resources. It is a striking fact that over fifty per cent of the total land area of Mexico falls within the range of altitudes found within this single municipio, that is, from approximately 3,500 to 9,500 feet. Tepoztlán is also distinctive in the way in which its statistical indices follow national figures for such items as the percentage of its arable land to total land, the percentage of its forest land to total land, and the average size of land-holdings. The rate of population growth as well as the distribution of age groups also closely parallels the national figures.

105 177 In Tepoztlán, as in Mexico as a whole, we find contrasting elements of the primitive and the modern, the old and the new, the Spanish colonial and the contemporary. Tepoztlán has a strong Indian heritage; many pre-Columbian traits persist in the village today. The system of communal land-ownership, an important aspect of the economy and social organization of the municipio, has remained practically intact. Many elements of pre-Hispanic agriculture are found; corn, beans, and squash remain the staple products. Pre-Columbian traits of material culture have also persisted, particularly in house construction, furnishings, cookery, foods, and clothing. Among the more important of these items we find adobe walls, the sweat-house (*temascal*) made of stone and mortar, clay plastered granaries for corn (*cuescomatl*), the hearth (*tlequilitl*), the three-legged grinding stone (*metate*), the clay griddle (*comal*), the mortar and pestle (*molcaxitl* and *texolotl*), huaraches, tortillas, chile, and pulque. In non-material culture there are also survivals, especially in curing and magic, and in customs pertaining to birth and other stages of the life cycle.[25] The Náhuatl language has also persisted. As late as 1927 Náhuatl [191] was spoken by nearly all the inhabitants, although most of the villagers also spoke Spanish.

The large number of Spanish colonial elements which still exist in the village culture today were introduced early in the sixteenth century soon after the Spanish Conquest. The most important of these traits are the physical layout of the village with its barrios, streets, and central plaza; Catholicism and the churches; the Spanish language; a money economy; domestic animals, the plow and other agricultural tools; and the greater part of the beliefs and customs of the people.

Side by side with the pre-Columbian and Spanish colonial elements are many significant items of modern industrial civilization, such as corn mills and sewing

[101] [131] [24] While the village of Tepoztlán is the primary subject of this study, the village cannot be understood except within the framework of the municipio of Tepoztlán, of which it is the *cabecera* (head), a status roughly equivalent to our county seat. In this study, therefore, there will be frequent references both to the village and the municipio.

[25] Many of Bernardino de Sahagún's descriptions of native Aztec diseases and their cures are still remarkably accurate descriptions of present-day customs in Tepoztlán. Indeed, many sections of Sahagún read as if he had been relying upon Tepoztecan informants.

2:Lewis E-5 (1943-1948) 1951 NU37 Tepoztlan NU37

1 *the setting:*

THE VILLAGE of Tepoztlán is in the state of Morelos, about sixty miles south of Mexico City. It is connected by a paved road with the Mexico City–Cuernavaca highway and is fifteen miles northeast of Cuernavaca. The village forms part of the municipio of Tepoztlán which embraces an area of 60,000 acres and consists of eight villages: San Juan, Santo Domingo, Amatlán, Ixcatepec, Gabriel Mariaca, San Andrés, Santiago, and Tepoztlán proper. The northern section of the municipio coincides in part with the boundary line between the state of Morelos and the Federal District. (See Fig. 2.)

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

The topography of the state of Morelos can be described as a sugar bowl, tilted to the southeast, with mountains forming the outer rim and the level, fertile lands of the sugar plantations forming the center. The municipio of Tepoztlán is on the northern rim of this bowl. It extends from the rugged, mountainous, and heavily wooded country in the north, down the slope of the Ajusco Mountain range to the level, fertile lands of the sugar plantation area near Yautepec. From the northern limits near Milpa Alta to the southern limits near Yautepec, a distance of about seventeen miles, there is a drop in altitude from about 10,500 feet [1] to about 3,700. While most of the villages tend to cluster near the center of the municipio (none are found in the extreme northern or southern portions), there is nevertheless a wide range in altitude among them. Indeed, the villages are located at seven different levels. The widest range is between San Juan in the north at about 7,000 feet, and San Andrés in the south at about 4,300 feet. But even in the case of Tepoztlán and San Juan, which are less than four miles apart, one is 2,000 feet above the other. (See Fig. 3.)

The northern part of the municipio is in *tierra fría* or the cold zone; the middle part is in *tierra templada* or the temperate zone; and the southern part is in *tierra*

[1] Otlayuca, the highest point in the northern portion of the municipio, is 3,151 meters or about 10,335 feet. See *Carta General del Estado de Morelos*, Secretaría de Fomento (Mexico, D.F., 1910).

2:Lewis E-5 (1943-1948)1951 NU37 Tepoztlan NU37

COURTESY OF DEPARTAMENTO AGRARIO, MEXICO, D.F.

Fig. 2. Tepoztlán and surrounding municipios.

caliente or the hot zone. San Juan, the highest village, is at the lower limit of *tierra fría* while San Andrés, the lowest village, is at the upper limit of *tierra caliente*. Three of the villages, Tepoztlán proper, Ixcatepec, and Amatlán, are at approximately the same level within the temperate zone. Santo Domingo is about intermediate between the cold zone and the temperate zone, and Santiago is about intermediate between the hot zone and the temperate zone.

To the north of the village is the mountainous and heavily wooded area locally known as the monte, which constitutes approximately fifty per cent of the total area of the municipio. The predominant trees are pine, fir, oak, and madroña.[2] The monte with its forest constitutes the greatest single natural resource of the municipio. It has traditionally been the source of firewood, lumber, and charcoal; and, as we shall see later, the monte has been the subject of bitter inter-village

[2] The species of trees in the monte are as follows: oak or *encino* (*Quercus reticulata*), (*Quercus albocinata*), and (*Quercus Laurinea*); fir or *ayamel* (*Abies religiosa*); pine or *ocote*, (*Pinus patula*); *Cuaxochitl* (unidentified).

2:Lewis E-5 (1943-1948) 1951 NU37 Tepoztlan NU37

MEANS OF COMMUNICATION

Tepoztlán has relatively good means of communication. It has a railroad, a modern highway, bus service, mail service, and one telephone. As we have seen earlier, the railroad was built about 1900. The building of the railroad was particularly significant, for it encouraged the commercial exploitation of certain natural resources on a scale formerly impossible. The railroad is used primarily for the transportation of wood and charcoal to Mexico City.

In 1936 the asphalt road connecting Tepoztlán with the Mexico City–Cuernavaca Highway was completed, and shortly thereafter a bus cooperative was organized.[40] The line was successful and expanded. At present there are two bus lines to Cuernavaca, both owned and operated by Tepoztecans and in bitter competition with each other. In 1944 each line operated four buses which ran every hour from seven in the morning to seven at night, seven days a week. The round-trip fare to Cuernavaca was 90 centavos. Both lines carried more than 1,600 Tepoztecan passengers to Cuernavaca and back each week. Four days a week there was an average of 175 passengers. On Tuesdays and Thursdays, the market days in Cuernavaca, there was an average of 300 a day, and 300 to 400 on Sundays.

Before the construction of the road, communication between Tepoztlán and surrounding regions was primarily by burro and by foot. The most frequent trading and social contacts were with Yautepec, about three hours' distance, and with Cuernavaca, about four hours' distance. Since the road has been built it takes about forty-five minutes to Cuernavaca by bus and about twenty minutes by private car. Since the coming of the road, Cuernavaca has replaced Yautepec in importance. This shift is significant because the greater cultural sophistication of Cuernavaca has accelerated the rate of change in Tepoztlán. The road has had many other far-reaching effects which will be discussed later.

Tepoztlán has had mail service since 1926, and mail is delivered daily. Redfield reported in 1926 that there was an average of about twelve letters a day, most of which were for families living in the center. In 1944 there were about thirty letters daily. This increase was relatively small considering the great increase in literacy, trade, and population.

Tepoztlán has had a telephone and telegraph since before the Revolution, but the lines have rarely functioned. In the early thirties the telephone was repaired, but there is little occasion for its use, except for official business. The bus lines have changed this situation somewhat, for the bus line officials have more frequent occasion to communicate with Cuernavaca.

[40] The first bus line was established by a man from Cuernavaca but it was soon taken over by Tepoztecans.

2:Lewis E-5 (1943-1948)1951 NU37 Tepoztlan NU37

423 476 794 the same lands which were worked for the Aztec priesthood were later worked for the Catholic Church.

COMMUNAL LANDS

175 423 The communal lands represent one of the oldest forms of landholding and have shown a remarkable stability through the years. The system of communal landholding has remained practically intact through both the Aztec and Spanish Conquests. Indeed, the similarity between the policy of the Spanish and Aztec conquerors of Tepoztlán toward the system of communal landholdings is noteworthy.

When Tepoztecans asked the Spaniards for legal title to their lands in the early sixteenth century, they were able to present maps showing the boundaries of their lands which they had held under Moctezuma. These ancient "titles" were used by the Spaniards as a basis for determining the limits of the land grants.[1] The present [131] limits of the municipio are therefore almost identical with those of pre-Hispanic days. Because most Tepoztecan lands were ill suited for either sugar or rice plantations, and because of the policy both of the Crown and of the Marqués del Valle, who conquered Tepoztlán in 1521, to alter only those native institutions which constituted a direct threat to the conquerors, the Marqués was not interested in Tepoztecan lands as such. Rather, he wanted taxes in the form of produce and later in money, and he wanted the labor of Tepoztecans to work his mines and haciendas.

Tepoztlán received its first land titles from the Viceroy Don Antonio de Mendoza in a grant dated May 20, 1548. This grant consisted of two *sitios de ganado mayor;* its next grant under Don Louis de Velasco, dated February 6, 1555, was for four *sitios de ganado menor* and eight *caballerías de tierra.*[2] These land grants gave Tepoztecans legal title to lands which they had traditionally worked and claimed.

[631] [648] The titles for the communal holdings of the municipio are considered very precious, and responsibility for their safekeeping is entrusted to the *síndico* of the municipal local government in Tepoztlán. These titles are used primarily in boundary disputes, which have been going on with neighboring municipios for the past four hundred years. From historical documents we learn that less than one hundred years after the Conquest the land titles had already been lost. The loss and recovery of the land titles has occurred again and again in the history of the municipio.

175 423 648 According to local tradition, the titles to the municipal lands fell into the hands of the Hacienda de San Gaspar during the middle of the last century. Tepoztecans were prohibited from using their own forest resources, which the hacienda used for wood fuel. The Tepoztecans carried on an extended feud with this hacienda, and the agents were killed on sight in the village. Apparently the hacienda was

[1] In these early land grants, the land was described as follows ". . . la mayor parte de tierra infructífera por los muchos cerros y lomas ásperas, barrancas y montes intransitables." These early documents also establish the fact that the village of Tepoztlán was the administrative seat of the municipio. The surrounding villages are listed as *pagos*. See *Ramo de Tierras*, Vol. 67 (1591), Exp. 11, Foja 12; and Vol. 3501 (1745), Exp. 1, Cuaderno 4. The ancient boundaries are also given in the *Relación*.

[2] *Ibid.*